



NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Social Services

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California Receives More than \$17 Million to Fund Refugee Employment and Social Services Programs

Sacramento – The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) today announced the allocation of more than \$17 million in federal funds to support employment and social services programs for refugees throughout the state. Refugees are individuals who are unable to return to their country of origin because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

“These very important services are designed to quickly assimilate refugee populations into the communities they live,” said Director Will Lightbourne. “By working collaboratively with county and community partners we are able to use these funds to address the specific needs of our diverse refugee population.”

The funding will allow counties with significant refugee populations to provide social, employment and training services to assist refugees to find jobs and to help them become self-sufficient as soon as possible after arrival to the United States. Included in this funding is a new federal discretionary grant, for which CDSS successfully competed, to promote the provision of services to refugees who are ‘hard to serve’ and thus finding greater difficulty integrating. Services will also be provided through the counties to help older refugees live as independently as possible and assist them to prepare for citizenship. Refugee school-age children will also be helped to achieve academically, and their parents will be assisted to participate in their children’s education.

Counties receiving funds for refugee programs include; Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus.

California’s Refugee Resettlement Program is made up of federal, state, county and community partners and helps assist eligible refugees and other targeted groups to successfully resettle in California.

California has received more than 41,000 refugees in the last five years. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Iran, Southeast Asia, the former Soviet Union, and Iraq. In addition, California has served more than 15,000 asylees and federal-certified trafficking victims during the last five years.

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